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Philadelphia: The Place and The People. By Agnes Repplier.

The Macmillan Co. xxi+392 pages and 81 illustrations.

In her preface Miss Repplier recalls a dry little history of her school days, of which one page only remains distinct in her memory—that containing West's picture of Penn's Great Treaty with the Indians at Shackamaxon. In this the Penn of thirty-eight years is represented as a portly, middle-aged gentleman, delivering a speech, twenty years before its real date, to a crowd of peaceful Indian families who are investigating with mild interest the various gifts strewn around; "the whole composition suggesting an entertainment midway between a church fair and an afternoon tea!"

Painted in the days when the carping voice of the art critic was not heard in the land, this picture hardly represents accurately the actual event; but its peaceful—nay, almost stolid—atmosphere well typifies the history of Philadelphia during its first seventy years of life.

Penn's religion and his colonial policy, while giving to the Quaker colony a long youth of most unheard-of peace and prosperity, robbed it of most of the picturesque qualities which go towards making interesting history. That the author has succeeded in giving a pleasantly readable account of those seventy Fat Years is due mainly to the gentle charm of her style and to her graceful humour. Her picture of William Penn—the White Truth Teller, as the Indians called him—from the days of his childish visions of "ghostly manifestations," through his militant young manhood, to his sad and poverty-stricken old age, has all the sympathy and vividness of West's brush with, in addition, the accuracy of a conscientious historian.

Of course, in studying colonial Philadelphia "we can no more escape from Benjamin Franklin than we can escape from Michelangelo in studying the treasures of Rome and Florence" and his name greets us from many a page. Though there is want of variety in his continual appearance as founder, director, or commissioner—in every event Philadelphian—it is the only monotony that he allowed himself in his eventful life, and our hearts warm anew to his genial, practical humanity. The glimpses of his domestic life and character are very welcome to the curious mind; and though to the flippant of to-day he may lack lightness of touch, still, when he writes to his wife, "I forgot to mention a fine jug for beer. I fell in love with it at first sight, for I thought it looked like a fat, jolly dame, clean and tidy, with a neat blue and white calico gown on, good-natured and lovely, and put me in mind of—somebody," we have no doubt that the compliment was pleasant to her loving heart.

The chapter on "How the Quaker City spent its money" is truly characteristic of the town. Mrs. Isaac Morris might be painted by Kneller in a "blue gown relieved by crimson;" the pretty young ladies might flirt, primly, at the "Dancing Assemblies" lately started; but there was a lack of abandon in these diversions which did not characterize the suppers and dinners of a later day with their bountiful provision of rum punch, and ale enough to warm the most unemotional natures. It is nothing to the discredit of these good Philadelphians that Miss Deborah Morris probably took as much pleasure in presenting a skeleton to the Philadelphia Hospital, and the Colonial Assembly in building the pretty Quaker Almshouses, as did the rich and gay in their social delights. It required the charming and gifted Major André and his friend De Lancey, at winter quarters with the British army in the city, to bring to Philadelphia the riot of gaiety which ended in the gorgeous Mischianza given as a parting fête to General Howe.

Those were wonderful days for the youth and fashion of the town, as is most interestingly told in this book.

The account of the time of the Continental Congress and of Philadelphia as the seat of the new republican government is relieved from the tedium of mere history by many biographical details. The heart warms to fighting Samuel Wetherell, leader of the Free Quakers, who was disowned by the Friends because he preached forcible resistance to the English. One pities sedate Elizabeth Drinker as she sees her house dismantled of old furniture and plate for the taxes which her husband will not pay to support the war.

And one listens with curiosity as Chief Justice McKean solemnly argues for the title of Serene Highness for the President of the Republic, as opposed to that of High Mightiness rather favoured by Washington himself.

With this book in hand it is not difficult to see and to love colonial Philadelphia. Under the guidance of Miss Repplier one may thread his way through crooked streets to the Old Swede Church standing in the middle of its quiet graveyard; or may look through the iron railings of Christ Church upon the ample stone which covers the remains of Benjamin and Deborah Franklin; or find his way to Carpenter Hill, in Jones Alley; or to the Betsy Ross House; or visit the quaint stone house of the botanist Bartram, surrounded by strange trees of his own planting; or drive to Belmont Mansion, once the scene of Judge Peters's convivial hospitality.

Any one who would know the heart and body of this placid, unemotional, dignified Quaker City may read this book, assured that he will profit by Miss Repplier's golden gifts of truth, charm and interest.

H. P. L.

Home Life in France. By Miss Betham-Edwards. With illustrations from photographs and famous paintings. Chicago, A. C. McClurg & Co., 1906. Second American Printing.

To peruse a work wherein every sentence almost bears the stamp of fairness and utmost good will towards a people is always a great pleasure. The authoress of the volume before us is animated by the kindest feelings towards the people of France, anxious to do them justice, oblivious completely of the deep national prejudices so characteristic of the English. She may not be always right in what she states, but if she errs and when she errs, it is rather through too strong a leaning to the French side of a question. Her book is very well written, appropriately illustrated, and full of interesting detail on questions related to her subject. But that subject is not directly geographical; it is rather ethnographic and sociologic, and a geographic Bulletin is not really the place for an exhaustive review. We may sincerely commend it to the general reader and to the student of sociology, but to discuss it would be going too far out of our way. To English and American readers who wish to acquire an independent opinion of the French people it is a valuable guide, if not a sure one on every point. The tribute paid to French intellect and genius is often touching, but the anxiety to be just and fair leads the author sometimes to overcredit.

It is a book that should do a great deal of good. Without aggressiveness, it is directed, perhaps not intentionally, against the barriers of traditional misunderstandings and historical aversion of nationalities. More of the kind would be "in order," and there is room yet for a great many more. Miss Edwards is not at all fond of American girls, for instance, or of American women in general; it might not be amiss if her example were followed by an explanation to the English, of American female character in a proper way.

A. F. B.